1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13



some pulling on their stubby little pipes and watching the men. As the men smoke, they may pass the pipe from mouth to mouth, but not so the women.

Tobacco (*akaya*) is a great vehicle for sociability whether in the pipe or in the form of snuff. 'Snuffing is held to clear the head, to clarify the thought, to enlighten the eyes, to sharpen the hearing, and comfort the heart.'[1] 'Taking a pinch of snuff, between the forefinger and the thumb, is unknown . . . and would be considered . . . very unsatisfactory. . . . They pour about a teaspoonful into the palm of the hand, and burying their . . . nostrils in the peppery mixture snort it up loudly, aided by a rotary motion of the half-closed hand.'[2]

Beer (*ocimbombo*) is of even greater importance. Its place has long been threatened by such drinks as the stronger beer made from emmer wheat (*ekundi*), mead (*ingundu* and *ocasa*), and imported rum. Within the past thirty or forty years the Ovimbundu have themselves learned to distil rum (*okacipembe*) from sweet potatoes, sugar-cane, pumpkins, &c., and although the industry is illegal, it has grown to great proportions and nothing now seems able to stop it. It is the widespread use of this strong drink, with its concomitant evils, which is to-day the greatest enemy of the social life.

The dance is probably the most important element in the social life of the village. The Ovimbundu have many different dances and they dance on every occasion and on the slightest provocation. I have collected thirty songs to accompany dances. About three-fourths of them are sometimes used at funerals or at other ceremonial occasions, some of them are for more frivolous purposes, and most of those which are used for ceremonies are used at other times also. It is not for nothing that an Umbundu equivalent of the proverb 'Strike while the iron is hot', runs as follows:

*Nda wa mõlã oñoma, piluka:*
When you see a drum, dance:
*Oñoma ka yi muĩwã luvali.*
A drum may not be seen twice.

During one of my visits to Ngendo there was an important funeral with much dancing at Ndumba, just across the valley. At

[1] Tucker, *Drums in the Darkness* (Toronto and New York; Doran, 1927), p. 38.
[2] Monteiro, *Angola and the River Congo*, 2 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1875), vol. ii, p. 271.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13



undoubtedly knew the apparatus and the method, but he appeared to have lost the dexterity which is necessary for a rapid moving of the hands from the bottom of the twirler to the top. There was consequently a long period of smoldering before the flame appeared. 372 171

Among the Vachokue a little wooden box of tinder, a piece of quartz, and an iron blade are carried for fire-making. From an Esele man a bag containing tinder and quartz was obtained.

The making of fire ceremonially in connection with ritual and sacrifice is described among the functions of the medicine-man, because the sacred and profane uses of fire are quite distinct.

Tobacco is a very important item of trade. The cultivation is a domestic industry followed usually by women but to some extent by men. In former days when the Ovimbundu traded extensively in Africa every man had a field of tobacco which he himself cultivated. At the present time each man is likely to have a mound of tobacco plants in the middle of a corn field (Plate XXIX, Fig. 1). Women do sometimes cultivate tobacco near their huts, but in this case the little plantation must be strongly fenced. Goats are numerous, and they eat the leaves of the tobacco plant with avidity. 249 462

Toward the end of September, when the rains begin, tobacco seed is sown on a patch of ground a yard square to raise seedlings which are planted out in October. A few flowers only are left to produce seed. As a further effort to improve the quality of the tobacco many of the lower leaves are removed. The cutting of leaves intended for use as tobacco is done by men in the months of February and March; women and children assist if the field is large.

After the midrib has been removed from each leaf, the leaves are suspended from the roof in a bundle. At the end of five days, when the leaves have turned brown, they are twisted into a long straight roll which is hung in the sun for three days. At intervals the roll is twisted in another direction. This gradually exposes all parts of the leaves, so that the drying is thorough. There are three methods of making up the rolls: *ombola* is an oval roll; *ongalo* is the round coil; *ocine* is the name given to tobacco which has been dried and twisted round a stick. Tobacco-pipes are varied in size and design (Plate XV, Figs. 1–3); those for men are larger than those used by women. A mixture of tobacco and hemp is smoked in a water-pipe made from the horn of a cow. Details of structure and ornament are given under "Wood-carving." 276

In order to make snuff a piece of dried tobacco is slowly baked near the fire on the end of a pointed stick which is turned frequently.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929~1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13



276 [531] The snuff is pounded and placed in a small wooden box of cylindrical shape. Usually the box is ornamented with incised, burned patterns. The Ovimbundu of Bihé add ashes of wood to their snuff, so producing a mixture called *ulelemo*. The Ovimbundu of Elende usually use the [549] snuff without adulteration. Two main species of tobacco plants are grown.

Women smoke in all parts of Angola. The Ovimbundu do not chew tobacco, neither have I seen it so used elsewhere in Angola. Boys and girls are not allowed to smoke before the age of thirteen years.

576 [834] In the *ombala* of the Vangangella near Ngalangi, I asked a girl for her pipe which I desired for my collection. The interpreter took the pipe when she proffered it, explaining that, according to local custom, I had asked for the girl. If I took the proffered pipe *from her hand* I accepted her. Another social custom associated with tobacco is the passing of the communal pipe from hand to hand in the men's council house.

276 171 Ngonga, my interpreter, says that he has never seen an Ocimbundu woman smoke hemp, but he has seen a woman of the Vangangella (people to the east of the Ovimbundu) smoking hemp. Hemp (*epangue*) is cultivated only by the Ovimbundu men who smoke it. Pure hemp is smoked in the water-pipe which is not passed from hand to hand. Only tobacco is used in communal smoking. Smoking of hemp or tobacco consists of a few deep inhalations; there is not usually a prolonged placid smoking. When hemp is placed in the bowl of the water-pipe it is covered with large grains of sand or a piece of tin. This intervening substance prevents the hot coals from coming into contact with the hemp. The object is to secure slow ignition.

## DOMESTIC ANIMALS

231 The principal domestic animals are cow (*onjindi*), ox (*ongombe*, which is also the generic name for cattle), bull (*onui*), sheep (*omeme*), goat (*ohombo*), pig (*ongulu*), dog (*ombua*), chicken (*osanji*) (Plates LV, LVI, LVII).

492 The transport animals, donkey, horse, and mule, are not used by the Ovimbundu of Elende and not to any extent by Ovimbundu of other parts; but in the south of Angola the Vakuanyama have sturdy ponies and well-kept mules. The ox when ridden by Portuguese is provided with a leather saddle which is very comfortable if covered with a blanket. The brass stirrups are broad and massive. Through the septum of the bullock's nostrils there is a short brass rod to the ends of which the reins are attached (Plate XXX, Fig. 1).

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13



787 532 A common type of small figurine, some of which are female, others asexual, is represented by an illustration (Plate XXI, Fig. 2). Such little carvings are a normal part of the miscellaneous contents of a divination basket described in chapter IX. These figures have been obtained from Elende, Bailundu, and Caconda, all of which are centers of Umbundu culture.

322 532 756 In addition to the figurines described, the collection contains many more whose use may be conjectured. The interrogation of Ovimbundu people indicates clearly that there are specific uses of wooden figures which are consulted by the medicine-man. The foregoing explanations illustrate the nature of the beliefs associated with carved wooden figures, but it is not always possible to elicit a clear account of the specific use of each one.

171 532 Consideration of this aspect of the wood-carver's art has an important bearing on the culture contacts of the Ovimbundu. In studying this question I have instituted comparisons between these figures from the Ovimbundu of Angola and similar figures from the Kasai area of the Congo region (chapter X). The publications of the Musée Congo Belge provide illustrations for comparison with the figures in Field Museum's collection.

The carving of animal forms (Plate XIX, Figs. 1–5) is no more than a means of aesthetic expression resulting from accurate observations of animal life as recorded under "Nature Lore." Inquiry failed to show that figures of animals are, or were at any time, used in rites and ceremonies.

[643] The carrying of a carved stick is essential when a chief is visiting, attending a council in his own village, or receiving visitors. The ornamental paddle (Plate XX, Fig. 8) was owned by the chief of the capital village (*ombala*) of the Vangangella, near Ngalangi.

[765] At the death of a chief his staff of office, with his tobacco-pipe and sleeping mat, are placed in a small house where such relics of deceased chiefs are kept permanently (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1). Plate XX, Fig. 6, shows a staff of this kind which was preserved in a sacred house in the capital village of Ngalangi, and on the same plate are drawn short ornamental clubs which French ethnologists call *batons de promenade*, an appropriate name because of their use as part of the full dress equipment.

[276] The Ovimbundu have specialized in the carving of small objects, for, in addition to clubs and staffs, tobacco-pipes and snuff boxes are often elaborately carved (Plate XV, Figs. 2, 4).

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13



The water-pipe of the Ovimbundu consists of the horn of a cow into the side of which a short hollow pipe stem is introduced; at the top of the stem is a clay bowl for the reception of tobacco, or a mixture of tobacco and hemp. The wide end of the horn is plugged with clay, while a hole is made at the tip in order to provide a mouth-piece. A gourd water-pipe, similar to that used by the Vachokue, is also found among the Ovimbundu. 276

Cylindrical snuff boxes are ornamented with incised, burned, geometrical patterns. The lid is usually attached to the box by a leather thong. One large snuff box is ornamented with three well-carved female figures. The smoker's equipment is sometimes carried in a leather pouch fastened on a waist belt, or the container may be a hollow cylinder of ivory with a leather cap at each end. 276 531

To this information respecting the smoking and snuff-taking outfit of the Ovimbundu, some observations on the pipes and snuff boxes of other tribes should be added. When making a journey from Cangamba to Saurimo I seldom met an Ocivokue man who was not carrying a gourd water-pipe for the smoking of tobacco and hemp. Such pipes are usually ornamented with brass nails and are finely bound with thin brass wire (Plate XV, Fig. 3). One long pipe from Ngalangi has a pair of metal tongs attached for taking charcoal from the fire in order to ignite the tobacco (Plate XV, Fig. 1). A pipe with two bowls, closely resembling some Zulu patterns, was smoked by an Ocimbundu woman at Ngalangi. The Vachokue make snuff boxes from a yellow wood, which they ornament by burning portions of the surface in such a way that the yellow color is here and there visible. 276 171

Both men and women of the Vakipungo and Vakuanyama tribes carry snuff boxes of conical shape on their leather waist belts. At the top and bottom such snuff boxes are neatly bound with brass or copper wire.

## DOMESTIC IMPLEMENTS

At an early age girls become accustomed to the use of the V-shaped pounder which is made from hard heavy wood (Plate XXXVI, Fig. 2). The small end of the shaft is a convenient thickness for grasping in such a way that the knuckles are on the under side of the shaft. This is the very reverse of what appears to be the natural grip. Women use the pounder with an easy, circular swing so that the flat round surface comes into contact with the grain on the rock. Endurance in this work is remarkable, and there is no doubt that 412

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13



276

[285]

TOBACCO-PIPES, SNUFF BOX, RAT TRAP, AND BASKET

[p. 369]